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LIFE LESSONS FROM METH MAKERS

WITH BREAKING BAD'S SERIES FINALE OVER, WE LOOK BACK AT WHAT THE DRAMA THAT CELEBRATED EVIL AND DEPRAVITY HAS TAUGHT US PAGE 13

Uncle Sam shuts down

Bitter budget fight has led to a halt of the American government PAGE 6

Mount Royal to cut enrolment in face of demand

Shortfall remains.
No further program suspensions, fee hikes on horizon

Mount Royal University will cut enrolment 10 per cent from peak levels despite already turning away more qualified applicants than ever before.

The institution, which already suspended eight programs and cut more than 60 faculty positions in the spring after a 9.3 per cent cut to once-promised government funding, now hopes to enrol a steady crop of 7,678 students annually starting in 2015-16. That's down from peak enrolment in 2012-13 of 8,523 students.

But Mount Royal also saw a 244 per cent increase in the number of qualified students turned away when comparing fall 2009 and fall 2012 numbers, and university administrative vice-president Duane Anderson said the school actually has the physical capacity to house 10,500 learners, but no money to do so.

"That's our challenge — we've got unprecedented demand and want and need for our programs, and without funding we can't meet that demand," he said Monday in a sit-down interview. "We don't want to take unfunded students in because it affects their experience at the university."

Quoted

"I understand that MRU's administration feels this is necessary, but what happens to Alberta in the long run when we send our brightest minds elsewhere to be educated?"

MRU Students' Association president Sadiq Valliani

The enrolment reduction plan was first announced in Mount Royal's 2013-16 comprehensive institutional plan, which was formally published online Monday, and quickly generated concern from the Students' Association of Mount Royal University.

"I understand that MRU's administration feels this is necessary, but what happens to Alberta in the long run when we send our brightest minds elsewhere to be educated?" questioned MRU Students' Association president Sadiq Valliani. "Having said that, our focus remains on ensuring MRU students continue to receive a high quality of education without disproportionately increasing costs to students."

Anderson did state there are no plans to increase a $120 annual student-services fee first introduced this fall up until at least 2015-16 — as long as provincial funding levels hold.

As well, he said some diploma and certificate programs will be rolled into degrees, but no further program suspensions are on the horizon.

But Mount Royal does still face a $6.9-million budget shortfall over the next two years after already combating a $14-million gap in the spring. Anderson said the primary focus will be on generating revenue through measures like hosting conferences on campus and performances in the soon-to-open Bella Concert Hall as well as finding operating efficiencies.

Efforts are also ongoing to educate students that never set foot on Mount Royal's campus through partnerships with schools in Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Grande Prairie and elsewhere, Anderson said.

A pilot project has also been launched at Calgary's Bishop Carroll High School allowing Grade 12 students to complete a first-year university course before ever setting foot at Mount Royal. Similar programs are planned for other area schools.

Mount Royal has also increased the number of open studies students on campus, but some faculty advisers worried last week that move was creating what they perceived to a be a major shortage of space in elective courses.

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

THE FUTURE IS NOW

Calgary Flames forward Sean Monahan moves the puck against the New York Islanders during NHL pre-season action in mid-September. Monahan will stick with the Flames to open the NHL season. More coverage, pages 25 and 26. LIAM RICHARDS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Ward 14.
Incumbent, challenger take some potshots

How and where to build homes and ever-looming talk of legalizing secondary suites stirred debate among two familiar rivals in a Ward 14 showdown of sorts Monday evening.

Both incumbent Peter Demong and challenger Shawn Kao strayed from the rules of the forum, hosted by CivicCamp, that asked participants not to take shots at each other.

Kao claimed that he would be a louder voice for residents in an area severely lacking infrastructure, while Demong repeatedly called into question whether his opponent had done his homework on contentious topics like the airport tunnel and vital southeast interchanges.

On housing specifically, Demong said a strong economy is key.

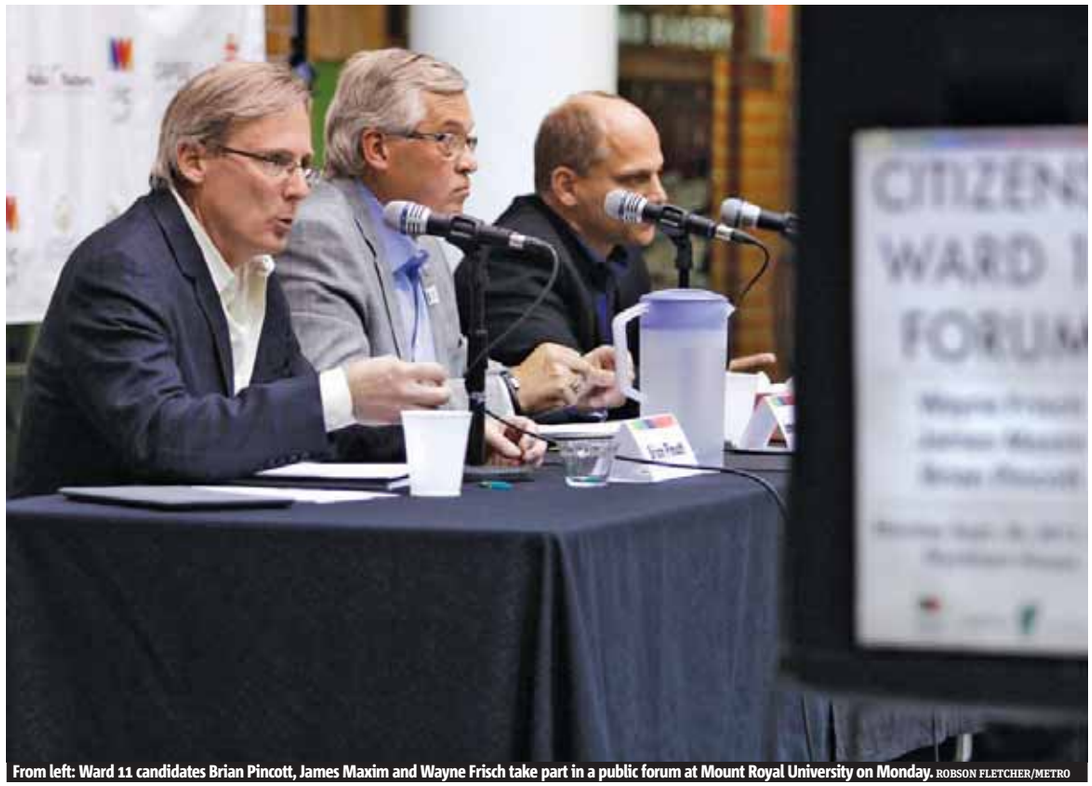
"It makes sure people have jobs they can depend on in order to make a mortgage, in order to make a down payment," he told the audience.

Challenger Shawn Kao, who placed third in the 2010 ballot, said he believes legalizing secondary suites is part of the housing solution to a looming rental-vacancy struggle.

"What I'm proposing is a secondary-suite policy, but with a cap ... The problem is people are very worried about getting secondary-suite policy and all the sudden you have 1,000 houses and 1,000 suites — that isn't true, that will not happen," he said.

But Demong said he prefers the current model that puts the onus on neighbours to raise issues with proposed suites. It was a signal that he will oppose a second attempt by Mayor Naheed Nenshi to change secondary-suite zoning rules citywide after Oct. 21 election day.

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO



From left: Ward 11 candidates Brian Pincott, James Maxim and Wayne Frisch take part in a public forum at Mount Royal University on Monday. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Ward 11 candidates come out swinging

CivicCamp. Opponents took some swipes, offering voters starkly different solutions to the hot-button issues

ROBSON FLETCHER
robson.fletcher@metronews.ca

Sharp divisions on development, secondary suites and campaign spending between Ward 11 candidates were made evident Monday night during a public forum at Mount Royal University.

"We have to change the way that we grow our city," incumbent Brian Pincott told a crowd of about 60 people when asked about urban density and sprawl. "Residents of Ward 11 are subsidizing people living 25 kilometres from downtown."

James Maxim, who finished a close second to Pincott in the 2010 election, disagreed strongly, saying the city has "some issues with urban sprawl" but added, "I don't believe it's a problem."

People coming in droves to work in Calgary's oil and gas industries primarily want to live in the suburbs and have green space, he added.

"I do not want to see any green space removed for any development," Maxim said.

Frisch said a false dichotomy has been set up between sprawl and densification.

"I think we can do both," he said.

On secondary suites, both Maxim and Frisch said they were opposed to a "blanket legalization," while Pincott supported the idea as one way to deal with what he described as a "housing crisis" in the city.

Candidates were also asked whether they would reveal their donors, and while all three said they would, two elaborated on the topic.

Pincott said there should be caps on how much candidates can spend on a campaign, in total.

"The fact that we have people spending over $200,000 to get on city council is wrong," he said.

Frisch agreed and added, "We have to take out union, organization and corporate donations."

Maxim's answer to the question came in a single sentence.

"My campaign organization released my donors list on nomination day," he said.

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Calgarians show vitality

Vital Signs. Annual report finds greater community connection post-flood, continued challenges at bottom of socioeconomic spectrum

Residents of this city are a resilient, optimistic and democratically minded bunch, according to the latest Vital Signs report, released Tuesday by the Calgary Foundation.

The annual gauge of Calgarians' overall quality of life and sense of well-being was unique this year, given some extenuating circumstances affecting the survey process.

"Right in the middle of the survey, the flood hit," said Calgary Foundation vice-president of communications Kerry Longpre.

The interruption actually offered a new opportunity to compare data, not just year-to-year but pre-flood and post-flood.

Quoted

"Ninety-one per cent described themselves as happy. Seventy-nine per cent are optimistic about Calgary being a good place to raise children. Sixty per cent feel they know their neighbours well enough to seek help or offer assistance."

Calgary Foundation vice-president of communications Kerry Longpre on the results of the 2013 Vital Signs report

"The grades were very consistent, but where they went up (after the flood) was in citizen engagement and neighbourliness and connecting with each other," Longpre said.

Overall, survey respondents gave Calgary's quality of life a rating of B+, which is consistent with the 2012 results.

Longpre said there are still some areas of concern, particularly the fact that young adults (age 20 to 34) and those with lower incomes were least likely to report feeling connected to their communities, as well as a significant increase in demand at the Calgary Food Bank.

She also noted that, ahead of the Oct. 21 municipal election, survey respondents said they'd like to see an increase in voter turnout, with 94 per cent "agreeing that it is every citizen's duty to vote."

Whether those words translate into action remains to be seen, but Longpre was optimistic that voter turnout may end up higher than the roughly 30 per cent many observers are predicting.

"There's an energy right now in the city to make sure we make this the best city possible and that we recover from the flood," she said. "Could that translate into more people thinking about who our leaders are going to be? We could hope."

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Taylor Barrie, communications co-ordinator with the Calgary Foundation, holds a copy of the 2013 Vital Signs report, released to the public on Tuesday.
GLENN KELLY/FOR METRO

Southeast

Weather blamed for ring-road delay

Long winters and frequent showers are behind a delay in opening Calgary's $769-million southeast ring-road leg, says the project contractor.

Metro first reported early Monday that the project — which will add dozens of kilometres of road around Calgary's outer limits as well as bridges, flyovers and interchanges — would not open Tuesday as originally planned. Alberta Transportation Minister Ric McIver said he hoped the project would be completed in "no more than a week or two."

But Dale Woodroffe, chief executive of contractor group Chinook Roads Partnership, was more optimistic, suggesting construction and safety evaluations could be concluded in two to three days. He said the project encountered repeated problems related to late-spring snowfalls and frequent rainfall.

Woodroffe also deflected criticism from an area alderman that his workers didn't push hard enough to get the project done on time.

"We could have thrown more people at it and we could have put more equipment on it, but the two areas that have slowed us down are the ramps at Deerfoot (Trail) and (Highway) 22X," he said. "You can't put more equipment on it because it's very linear in its approach. You have got to wait until the next piece is done, the bridge is done, the ramp is done. It's one step at a time."

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

Homeowner tours former Freemen 'embassy'

A woman has seen her Calgary rental home for the first time since a self-proclaimed sovereign citizen was removed from the property last week.

Rebekah Caverhill has said the man claimed the duplex as his "embassy" shortly after moving in and she has spent nearly two years trying to get him out.

Caverhill cried Monday as she toured the beige-brick duplex with a throng of reporters and cameras.

Windows were covered with towels, clothing was heaped on floors and dirty dishes were piled in the kitchen that smelled like rotten food.

A sign on the door of one room called it a meeting place for people of the "First Nations Sovran Embassy of Earth."

Caverhill said she was glad her father wasn't alive to see the mess inside the building he used to look after. "He would be so upset," she said.

Caverhill said she rented the home to Andreas Pirelli in November 2011.

A few months later, Caverhill said Pirelli, who identified himself as a follower of the Freemen-on-the-Land movement, had claimed the home.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rebekah Caverhill reacts as she enters her rental property for the first time in Calgary on Monday, after a follower of the Freemen-on-the-Land movement was arrested and removed from the home. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Candidate apologizes for Campaigning Bad

Finale, interrupted. Ward 9 incumbent rebuffed by Breaking Bad viewer during door-knocking rounds

He is the one who knocks — just maybe not at the most appropriate time.

As 10.3 million Breaking Bad fans across North America were glued to their TV screens Sunday night, Gian-Carlo Carra was roaming the streets of Calgary's Ward 9.

The incumbent city council candidate was doing his door-knocking rounds, talking to constituents ahead of the Oct. 21 municipal election, apparently unaware he might be interrupting the emotionally gripping series finale of what is widely hailed as the best show on television ever.

"I told him to go away," series fan Jared Folkmann said Monday, after Carra showed up at his doorstep right in the middle of the final episode. "I think the literal translation was: 'Dude, you're interrupting Breaking Bad. Can't talk. Bye.'"

A contrite Carra — who admitted he's only caught up to Season 3 of the award-winning series — apologized Monday, saying he lost track of time and his door-knocking "spilled over" into the long-awaited final broadcast.

"I'm sorry for what I did and I want the voters of Ward 9 to know that behaviour like that is unacceptable," Carra told Metro, tongue planted lightly in cheek. "I hope they'll see fit to forgive me and still support me on Oct. 21."

Folkmann, who had a lighthearted exchange with Carra on Twitter about the interruption, accepted the apology.

"I'm glad he had a good sense of humour about it," Folkmann said.

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Gian-Carlo Carra, seen here striking his best Walter White pose, apologized Monday for interrupting a voter's viewing of the final broadcast of Breaking Bad. GLENN KELLY/FOR METRO

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Teen who helped kill family doing well in treatment, judge hears

The lawyer for an Alberta woman who helped kill her family when she was just 12 says his client is a "poster child" for how young offenders can be rehabilitated.

But a Medicine Hat judge ruled the 19-year-old, who can't be named, will still have to abide by a curfew for now.

Tim Foster, the lawyer representing the woman, who will turn 20 in a few weeks, asked Queen's Bench Justice Scott Brooker on Monday to lift her 11:30 p.m. curfew.

The court heard that the woman is excelling in both work and school, is living on her own and is a low risk to reoffend violently.

Crown prosecutor Brandy Shaw noted that the woman has recently moved and has encountered changes at her job, raising concerns that lifting the curfew may be too much change all at once.

Brooker decided to keep the curfew in place, citing the young woman's best interests.

But Brooker promised to revisit the question in December.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

2006 murders

The 19-year-old has 2 1/2 years remaining on her 10-year sentence for the 2006 murders of her mother, father and younger brother in their Medicine Hat home.

Owners, builders

Province zeroes in on condo disputes

Alberta is looking to make it easier and quicker for condo owners to deal with everyday issues without a lengthy court procedure. Services Minister Manmeet Bhullar says the goal is to set up a tribunal system by next spring where an adjudicator will hear the concerns and come up with a decision that is binding and enforceable. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dating to Aug. 7. Police hunting suspect in alleged indecent acts near transit

Calgary police want tips to identify a man who may be involved with sexual assaults and other lewd acts committed near public-transit sites.

Authorities said Monday the three female victims were between the ages of 16 and 22 and were attacked separately on Aug. 7 and Sept. 12 and 17. The latest incident allegedly happened on a bus from Skyview to Saddleridge and the prior two occurred at a green space near Heritage Station.

Accounts of the suspect varied wildly, according to police, who describe the man as between 20 to 35 years old and between five-foot-eight to six feet. METRO

Thawing relations. Baird warns United Nations of Iranian 'charm' offensive

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird warned the United Nations General Assembly on Monday to avoid being taken in by any Iranian charm offensives.

Baird evoked the memory of the failed appeasement of Nazi Germany in the year before the Second World War as he urged the gathered members to tread carefully when taking Iran at its word.

Baird was addressing an apparent thaw in three decades of strained relations between the U.S. and Iran after U.S. President Barack Obama spoke by phone with his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani last week. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Saudi Arabia

Doctor rejects claim that driving affects woman's ovaries

A Saudi doctor has gone on-air to dismiss claims made by a well-known cleric who caused a stir when he said medical studies show driving affects a woman's ovaries.

Gynecologist Mohammed Baknah says scientific studies have not proven that driving has adverse effects on women's reproductive health.

He was addressing remarks by Sheik Saleh Saad el-Leheidan who said that women who drive suffer from having the pelvis forced upward. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republicans grind Congress to a halt

The morning sun illuminates the U.S. Capitol in Washington on Monday. At midnight, Congress ordered a partial government shutdown because it could not reach an agreement on funding. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Funding squabble. Feds miss midnight deadline for averting partial shutdown

For the first time in nearly two decades, the federal government staggered into a partial shutdown Monday at midnight after congressional Republicans stubbornly demanded changes in the nation's health-care law as the price for essential federal funding and President Barack Obama and Democrats adamantly refused.

As Congress gridlocked, Obama said a "shutdown will have a very real economic impact on real people, right away," with hundreds of thousands of federal workers furloughed and veterans' centres, national parks, most of the space agency and other government operations shuttered.

He laid the blame at the feet of House Republicans, whom he accused of seeking to tie government funding to ideological demands, "all to save face after making some impossible promises to the extreme right wing of their party."

The stock market dropped on fears that political deadlock between the White House and a tea party-heavy Republican Party would prevail, though analysts suggested significant damage to the national economy was unlikely unless a shutdown lasted more than a few days.

While some 800,000 federal workers faced furloughs, some critical parts of the government — from the military to air traffic controllers — would remain open. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Editor maps the Road to the NHL

A must read! Philip Croucher of Metro Halifax tells 25 stories of Maritimers making it up the long and winding path to the big leagues

DAVE LANGFORD
dave.langford@metronews.ca

The road to the NHL takes many different twists and turns for players seeking their first glimpse of the sights and sounds of a National Hockey League arena.

None more difficult than the path taken by Fredericton's Willie O'Ree.

More than 10 years after Jackie Robinson broke the colour barrier in major-league baseball, O'Ree had the same distinction in the National Hockey League.

The date was Jan. 18, 1958, and O'Ree was a Boston Bruins farmhand called up from the Quebec Aces for his first game. The site was the old Montreal Forum, and there was little fanfare.

"I didn't know what I had done until I read the papers. It was the media that gave me the name 'the Jackie Robinson of hockey.'"

The story is one of the favourites in a new book, written by Metro Halifax managing editor Philip Croucher, titled Road to the NHL: The incredible stories of 25 Maritimers making it to The Show.

Croucher said it was a "privilege" to talk to O'Ree more than 50 years after that groundbreaking day.

"The big thing was not just the racism he felt," Croucher said. "He also was playing basically with one eye. A lot of people forget that. Not only was he dealing with constant racist chants while he was playing, but he was also not able to physically see like he wanted to."

Croucher said O'Ree's inclusion in the book was an easy one, but it wasn't as simple making all the choices.

He said the book deals with the path to the National Hockey League and not the events that happened once they got there.

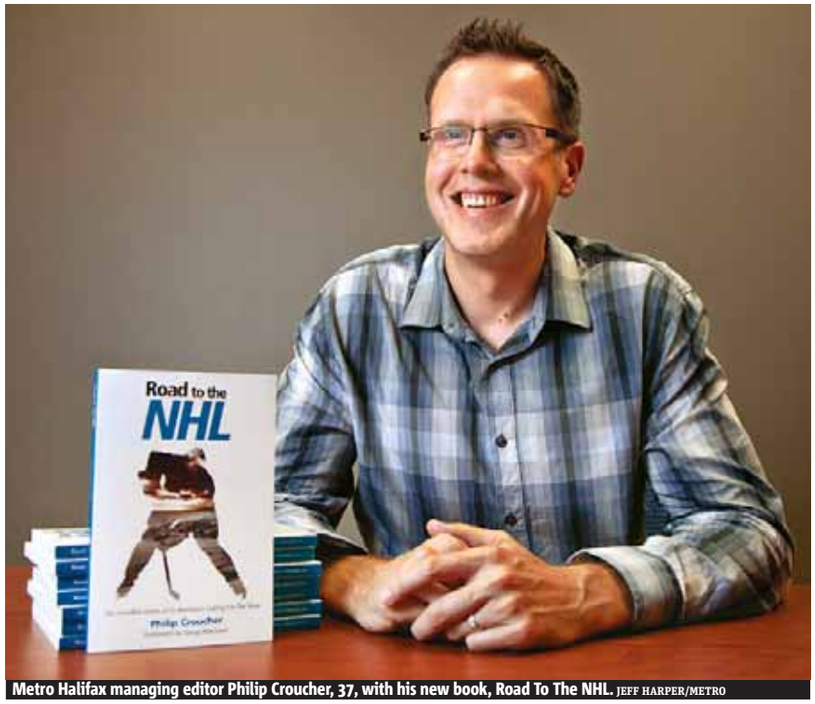
The Road to the NHL contains 25 great hockey stories. Great yarns all.

The players profiled

1 Nova Scotia. Eric Boulton, Sidney Crosby, Norm Ferguson, Lowell MacDonald, Al MacInnis, Paul MacLean, Brad Marchand, Mike McPhee, Glen Murray, Jody Shelley, Colin White.

2 New Brunswick. Mike Eagles, Danny Grant, Randy Jones, Rollie Melanson, Willie O'Ree, Scott Pellerin, Don Sweeney.

3 Prince Edward Island. Gerard Gallant, Forbes Kennedy, Al MacAdam, Billy MacMillan, Bobby MacMillan, Adam McQuaid, Brad Richards.



Metro Halifax managing editor Philip Croucher, 37, with his new book, Road To The NHL. JEFF HARPER/METRO

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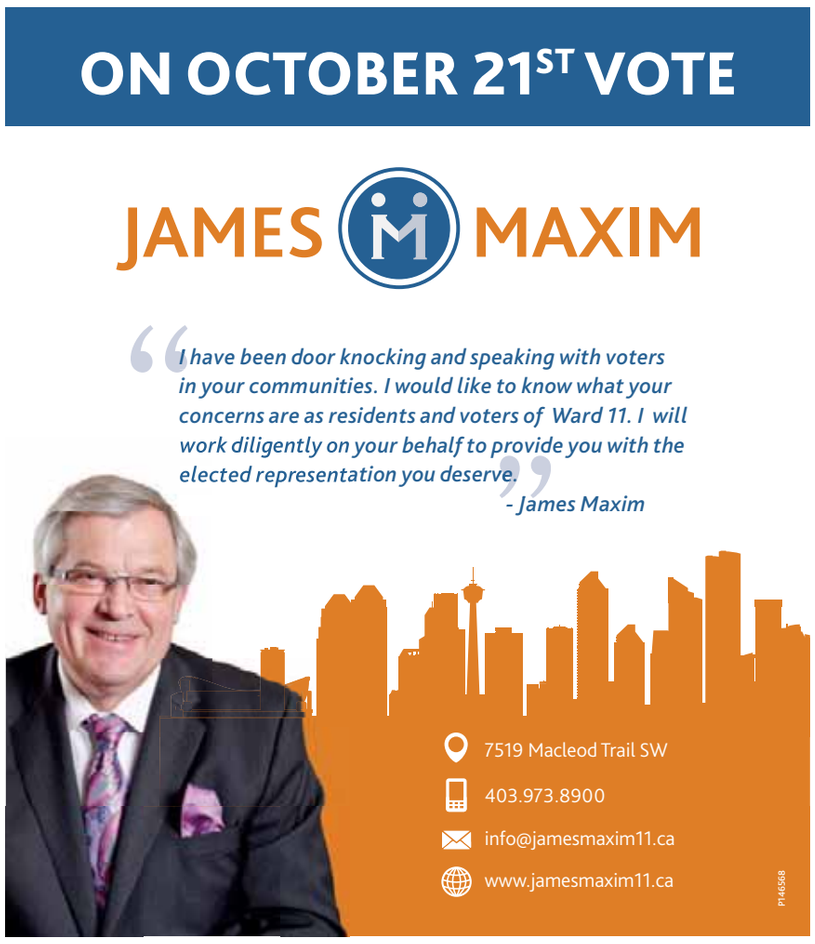
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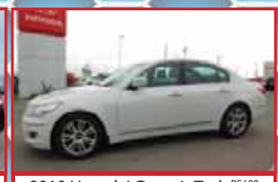


2010 Hyundai Genesis Tech B5608
74,395 km • Leather • Sunroof • Nav
$26,469 or $191/bw

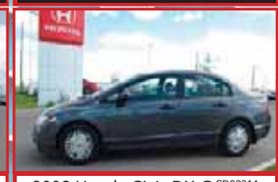
2013 Acura ILX B5562
3,869 km • Nav • Leather • Sunroof • Bluetooth
$28,469 or $197/bw

2008 Honda Civic LX B5590
64,511 km • Cruise • Keyless Entry • A/C
$12,467 or $119/bw

2008 Honda Accord EX-L AD0732A
140,121 km • Leather • Heated Seats • Sunroof
$26,369 or $190/bw

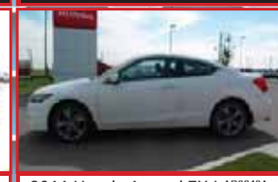
2010 Honda Odyssey EX-L B5520A
84,854 km • Leather • Sat Radio • Sunroof
$26,369 or $190/bw

2009 Nissan Rogue SL PD0267A
130,554 km • 17" Alloys • Heated Seats
$15,469 or $135/bw



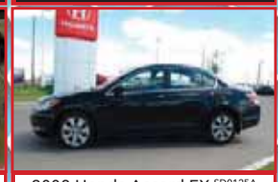
2009 Honda Civic DX-G CD0931A
96,799 km • Auto • Cruise • Keyless Entry
$12,969 or $106/bw

2009 Subaru WRX 265 B5572
65,996 km • 2.5L Turbo • Sunroof • Alloys
$25,467 or $208/bw



2011 Honda Accord EX-L AD0840A
82,335 km • Nav • Leather • Bluetooth
$24,467 or $176/bw

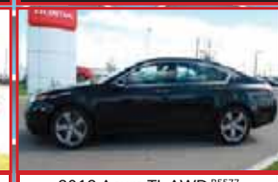
2012 Nissan Murano SV CD0940BL
30,590 km • Bluetooth • Htd. Seats • Sunroof
$30,369 or $233/bw



2008 Honda Accord EX SD0125A
101,144 km • Sunroof • Cruise • Alloys
$14,467 or $138/bw

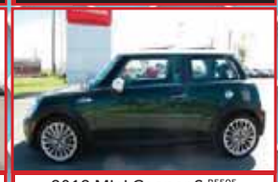
2007 Pontiac Montana SV6 PD0195A
123,897 km • Cruise • Keyless Entry • Alloys
$9,457 or $91/bw

2011 Honda Pilot Touring B5569
65,321 km • Nav • DVD • Bluetooth
$35,467 or $255/bw



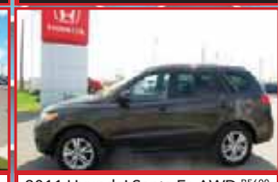
2012 Acura TL AWD B5577
31,497 km • Leather • Bluetooth • Sunroof
$35,969 or $259/bw

2013 Ford Escape Titanium B5593
37,810 km • Leather • SYNC • 19" Alloys
$32,467 or $211/bw

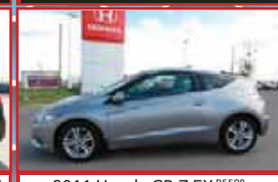


2012 Mini Cooper S B5595
6,231 km • Leather • Auto • Sunroof
$33,969 or $245/bw

2011 Honda CR-V LX 4WD B5589
42,576 km • Alloys • Cruise • Keyless Entry
$24,467 or $176/bw



2011 Hyundai Santa Fe AWD B5600
56,191 km •GL • Bluetooth • Heated Seats • Alloys
$24,467 or $175/bw



2011 Honda CR-Z EX B5598
18,111 km • Hybrid • Bluetooth • Cruise
$19,969 or $144/bw

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Harper nominates male appeal judge

Supreme Court.
Decision raises questions about gender imbalance in nation's highest court

Prime Minister Stephen Harper dipped into the ranks of the Federal Court of Appeal on Monday to nominate Justice Marc Nadon to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court of Canada.

The appointment marks the second time in two years that Harper has filled a Quebec-designated seat with a male appointment, once again raising questions about why he hasn't done more to address the so-called gender imbalance on the country's highest court.

Nadon's appointment, which will likely be approved, would maintain a ratio of six men to three women on the high court.

Nadon's nomination comes after the mandatory retirement of former justice Morris Fish this past August. Some legal observers had been expecting Harper to appoint a woman in order to even out the high court's gender balance.

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair walked the fine line Monday between praising Nadon as a worthy addition to the court while recognizing the lack of overall female representation on it. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Omar Khadr case

- Nadon wrote a dissent in the Federal Court of Appeal's split decision in the Omar Khadr case. Nadon sided with the Harper government and wrote that "Canada has taken all necessary means at its disposal to protect Mr. Khadr during the whole period of his detention at Guantanamo Bay."
- Nadon was overruled by two fellow jurists who ordered the government to request Khadr's repatriation from Cuba.

Romania.
Spy agency monitoring gold mine

Romania's domestic spy agency has been monitoring developments involving a planned Canadian-owned gold mine for years, its chief acknowledged Monday, saying that some demonstrations against the project have been manipulated by people he called "eco-anarchists."

The mine, run by Gabriel Resources, is sitting on an estimated 314 tons of gold and 1,500 tons of silver. Proponents have been trying to get permits for 14 years but so far no date has been set for it to begin operating.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former doctor back in court

Isabelle Gaston, ex-wife of Guy Turcotte, speaks to reporters during a break in the appeal hearing Monday in Montreal. Turcotte was found not criminally responsible in the 2009 slayings of his two children. The case of the former Quebec doctor who killed his young children returned to court Monday with the Crown appealing a verdict that found him not criminally responsible. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Inflight services offer taste of the good life

Airlines. Want to rent an iPad preloaded with movies? Want an empty seat next to you? Get ready to open your wallet

Airlines in the U.S. are introducing a new bevy of fees, but this time passengers might actually like them. Unlike the first generation of charges which dinged flyers for once-free services like checking a bag, these fees promise a taste of the good life, or at least a more civil flight.

Extra legroom, early boarding and access to quiet lounges were just the beginning. Airlines are now renting Apple iPads preloaded with movies, selling hot first-class meals in coach and letting passengers pay to have an empty seat next to them. Once on the ground, they can skip baggage claim, having their luggage delivered directly to their home or office.

In the near future, airlines plan to go one step further, using massive amounts of personal data to customize new offers. "We've moved from takeaways to enhancements," says John F. Thomas of L.E.K. Consulting. "It's all about personalizing the travel experience."

Carriers have struggled to raise airfares enough to cover costs. Fees bring in more than $15 billion US a year and are the reason the airlines are profitable. But the amount of money coming in from older charges like baggage and reservation change fees has plateaued. So the airlines are selling new extras and copying marketing methods honed by retailers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Passengers check in their luggage at the Delta counter at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport on Friday. JOHN AMIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BlackBerry. Fairfax deal could be done at lower price, analysts suggest

Analysts predict that Fairfax Financial will follow through on plans to buy BlackBerry but could pay substantially less than originally announced, as the smartphone maker's market value erodes. Fairfax announced Sept. 23 that it was leading a group that would offer $9 US per share, subject to a number of conditions.

However, CanaccordGenuity analyst Michael Walkley says a $7-per-share bid is likely to materialize once Fairfax and its partners complete further due diligence over the next month.

Based on CanaccordGenuity's assessment, BlackBerry would be worth about $1 billion less than Fairfax's initial proposal, which valued the company at $4.7 billion US.

Walkley said he has reassessed the company's assets to take into account BlackBerry's flagging hardware operations, which were the main reason for a $965-million US loss in the company's second quarter.

"Given our belief BlackBerry's hardware business will struggle to return to profitability despite significant cost cuts and a refocus on more high-tier enterprise segments, we struggle to assign any value to the hardware business," Walkley wrote. "Our sum-of-the-parts analysis values BlackBerry at roughly $3.75 billion."

BlackBerry shares have fallen well below the proposed bid value since Fairfax announced the offer a week ago.

Investors have been skeptical that Fairfax will successfully complete the acquisition of BlackBerry because its quickly eroding market share and high operational costs create the kind of uncertainties that make investors and lenders nervous. "We doubt a strategic investor will show interest, given the pace of decline in BlackBerry's business," wrote Nomura analyst Stuart Jeffrey, who reduced his target price to $8 to take into account risks to the current bid. THE CANADIAN PRESS

What's it worth?

$3.75B

CanaccordGenuity analyst Michael Walkley values BlackBerry at roughly $3.75 billion. That's about $1 billion less than Fairfax's initial proposal.

Market Minute

DOLLAR
97.06¢
(unchanged)

TSX
12,787.19 (-56.89)

OIL
$102.33 US (-54¢)

GOLD
$1,327 US (-$12.20)

Natural gas: $3.56 US (-3¢)
Dow Jones: 15,129.67 (-128.57)

Renewable energy

Ikea to sell solar panels in U.K.

Ikea will start selling residential solar panels at its stores in Britain, the first step in its plan to bring renewable energy to the mainstream market worldwide. A standard, 3.36-kilowatt system for a semi-detached home will cost about $9,500 and include an in-store design service as well as installation, maintenance and energy monitoring service. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SPOILER ALERT: I'M A NETFLIX CHEATER

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

I'm in a loving and happy relationship but I have to admit that lately I have had a problem with cheating. I do it late at night, usually during the week and so far I've never been caught.

Before you get the wrong idea, I should point out that my specific brand of infidelity involves a television remote and an insatiable appetite for 50-minute dramas. I'm of course talking about Netflix cheating.

Like any good North American couple burdened with a mortgage that restricts discretionary spending, television is a popular pastime in our household. Over the years we've developed a roster of programs that are "ours" and we have vowed to always enjoy these shows together ... well, in theory.

The problem is that Netflix has changed the way people watch television; with multi-season streaming available at our fingertips, viewers no longer have to wait a week between episodes or suffer through summers full of reruns. Online on-demand services make it possible for us to watch hundreds of thousands of hours of programming virtually whenever and wherever we want.

And when every episode ends on a cliff-hanger and the next show begins to play automatically, it's hard for greedy consumers to switch off. If I was crafty enough to figure out how to access the far superior American version of Netflix I might never leave the house.

My insatiable appetite for high-quality programming means that sometimes I find myself watching our shared shows even when my viewing partner is out for the night. And, as much as I hate to admit it, I've gotten pretty good at deceiving him. I can fake a convincing surprised expression when major plot twists are revealed and I've learned how to reset the account in order to erase the evidence of my digital betrayal.

Sure I may be weak and disloyal but at least I'm not alone in my shame. Earlier this year, Netflix conducted a survey among its American customers as part of a promotional campaign. Their poll revealed that over 50 per cent of couples have considered cheating on their significant other by streaming a television program that they'd promised to watch together. Now I'm well aware that, on the list of privileged-people problems, fighting over your viewing habits is right up there with Starbucks running out of pumpkin-spice syrup. Still, that doesn't mean I feel any less guilty about my indiscretions.

So consider this column a public admission of my infidelity and a pledge to make a change. From now on I promise to try and remain faithful to the sacred union between a couple and their big screen ... right after I finish watching episode four of House of Cards.

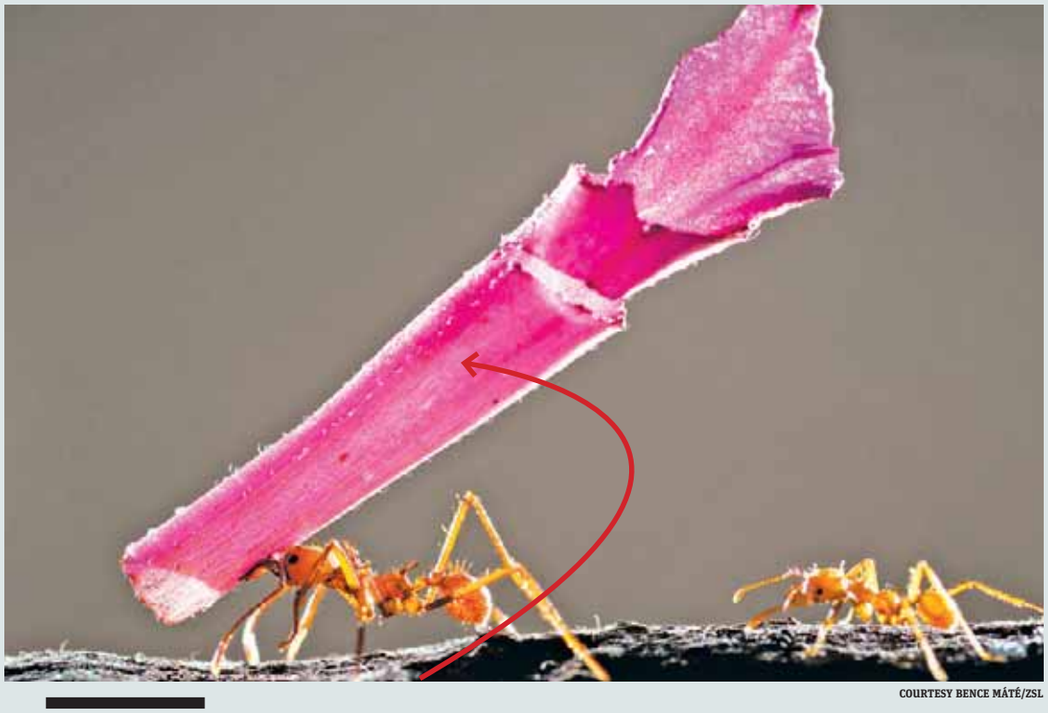
What we watch when our partner is not watching

My insatiable appetite for high-quality programming means that sometimes I find myself watching our shared shows even when my viewing partner is out for the night.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

That other ant is going to look pretty lame when it comes back with nothing



COURTESY BENCE MÁTÉ/ZSL

Herculean ant pic wins top award

A tiny leafcutter ant demonstrating its immense strength is among the winning images from this year's Zoological Society of London's (ZSL) Animal Photography competition. Bence Máté, from Szeged, Hungary, shot this vibrant picture at the Laguna de Lagarto rainforest lodge, near Boca Tapada in northern Costa Rica. METRO

Two of the all-time best ant facts

50
times their own body weight is what an ant is capable of carrying.

30,000
eggs is how many each queen leafcutter ant lays each day.

Clickbait

HANNAH ZITNER
hannah.zitner@metronews.ca

For the Breaking Bad PVR set, turning on your computer (or leaving your house) can be terrifying. While we can't help what your local barista discloses, we can tell you how to create your own world wide web free of unwanted spoilers, pop stars and advertisements.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION/METRO

Spoiler Shield
This free iDevice app let's you cruise Facebook, Twitter spoiler-free the day after missing your favourite TV series, sports game, reality show.

No Cyrus:
Though the Miley Cyrus stir is slowly starting to stop, for those who have absolutely reached their limits with the Disney wreck, there's an app. The No Cyrus Chrome plug-in filters out all mentions of the teen formerly known as Hannah Montana.

Adblock Plus
Among the most popular of the adblock programs, Adblock Plus not only blocks ads, but also can be used to block tracking and malware. Best of all, it's free.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: The Toronto Raptors to get a rebrand as international hiphop superstar Drake takes over as the struggling basketball team's global ambassador. How can Drake make the team cool again?

Hopefully Drizzy looks good in purple.
@rebverb

Get them to win.
@ruggles79

Well they're basically starting from the bottom, so...
@DizzleDaKing

Follow @metropicks to answer our poll question. Best answers published right here.

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Don't dissolve a body in a bathtub, and other lessons

Breaking Bad. With the exciting finale of the dark, ultra-popular show behind us, we list the top 10 things to be learned from Walt's world

Meth cook/science maestro Walter White laundering money in the pilot episode of Breaking Bad. AP PHOTO/AMC

Sunday's Breaking Bad turned out the lights on one of the darkest shows in television history.

Even as this drama cooked up storylines that celebrated evil and depravity, Breaking Bad gleamed with a bright side, too. There were plenty of positive messages for the viewer who acknowledged them during the series' five-season run.

Here are 10 lessons Breaking Bad leaves behind:

1) Stay in school and study hard!
As Walter White demonstrated after he ditched teaching for producing crystal meth, you can make millions from a subject like chemistry that far too many youngsters (including Mr. White's bored students) find annoying and useless. Walt (a.k.a drug lord Heisenberg) proved otherwise with his storage shed of money.

2) Chemistry has everyday applications.
The next time you dispose of a corpse with hydrofluoric acid, all you devoted Breaking Bad viewers will know not to dissolve the body in a bathtub, but instead in a plastic container. You learned this valuable tip in season one, when Walt's lab assistant Jesse Pinkman disregarded his instructions and regretted it. The acid memorably dissolved through the bathtub and floor at Jesse's house, leaving a bloody mess in the hallway downstairs. You won't make that mistake.

3) Family is oh, so important.
Breaking Bad reminds you that entering the drug trade and messing with the wrong people in it can lead to your wife and teenage son despising you. It can also lead to your brother-in-law getting brutally murdered. You would hate that if it happened.

4) Build a better mousetrap.
Steve Jobs knew it. Jeff Bezos knows it. Walt White serves as a mythical champion of their kind of acumen: Offer a better product with an obvious advantage, and the world (or, anyway, addicts who loved Walt's super-potent "blue sky" crystal meth) will beat a path to your door.

5) Need a lift? Try a personal makeover.
If you're stuck in a rut, like Walter White at the start of Breaking Bad, consider a new look. Shave your head, grow a tidy, I-mean-business beard and fit yourself with a black pork pie hat. Then come up with a new name. Like Heisenberg. In your new identity, people will fear you and you're sure to go far.

6) Keep your personal vehicles, especially your RV, in good running order.
A regular checkup to keep Walt's rolling meth lab in tip-top shape would have spared him and Jesse inconvenience, not to mention mortal danger.

7) Keep a shrewd lawyer on call, especially if you mean to routinely break the law.
Sure, he may be a sleazebag and a shameless self-promoter. But a lawyer like Saul Goodman ("Better call Saul!") is worth his weight in hundred-dollar bills to a client like Walter White, whom he represented faithfully, if more than often sarcastically. With his mastery of trade practices — legal and illegal — Saul was the most impressive TV lawyer since Perry Mason.

8) Like it or hate it, Obamacare in the U.S. might cut down on illegal drug trade (at least on TV).
If financially strapped schoolteacher Walt White had had better health care when he got his cancer diagnosis, maybe he wouldn't have begun cooking meth to help cover his expenses. Meanwhile, his long-term problem — leaving his family provided for after his death — might have been a non-issue had teachers in his district been better paid. On the other hand, if Walt had found himself in less of a jam, there would have been no Breaking Bad.

9) Finish what you start.
It's never good to leave hanging important tasks. Walt is a shining example of a guy determined to tie up loose ends. That was part of why the Breaking Bad finale was so good.

10) Follow your bliss (and be willing to forge a different path getting there).
Walter White discovered this lesson. Vince Gilligan demonstrated its wisdom in real life by creating Breaking Bad, a radically different series. So did AMC execs by airing what turned out to be perhaps the best drama of all time. How many other networks are willing to learn?

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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The Millers debuts Thursday on Global. CONTRIBUTED

In defence of farts: Arnett's case

The Millers. Comedian doesn't understand why critics are fussing over flatulence

Will Arnett is ready, willing and able to talk about flatulence.

Hyper aware of the stink raised by critics over a particularly gaseous gag in his new sitcom, The Millers, the TV comic launches into a fervent defence of the everyday moment during a recent interview to promote Thursday's premiere.

The joke plays out soon after his character Nathan, a recently divorced TV reporter, begrudgingly welcomes his newly single mother, played by Margo Martindale, into his home.

Upon returning from work, he barely greets his mother before having to ask: "Did you (pass gas)?"

"This happens when you get older, they just slip out," Carol replies.

Arnett says he can't understand what the fuss is about, recounting a conversation he had with a critic who considered it "low-brow."

"And I said, 'You know what? Give me a break. Everyone is taking themselves so seriously, who cares?'" Arnett says in a phone call from Los Angeles.

"It's a very funny moment and it's very real and it's a son asking his mom about it. It's not done in a gross way. It's just done in a very sort of real way."

Some might see the broad comedy as a departure of sorts for the Toronto-born Arnett, who rose to fame playing quirky characters in sharp-edged single-camera sitcoms including Arrested Development and 30 Rock.

Here, he plays a regular Joe who is eager to rediscover the single life, but his plans are interrupted when his meddlesome parents decide they are separating after 43 years of marriage.

The Millers debuts Thursday on CBS and Global.

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DVD review

This is the End

Directors. Evan Goldberg, Seth Rogen

Stars. James Franco, Jonah Hill, Seth Rogen

●●●●○

Comedy/horror hybrids are a dime a dozen, and This Is the End doesn't exactly reinvent the wail. But it goes to extremes not often seen, especially with actors playing with their public personas and CGI providing a convincingly terrifying disaster scenario. You can view the film as gross-out comedy, where regulars of the Judd Apatow laugh factory — namely Seth Rogen, Jay Baruchel, James Franco, Jonah Hill, Craig Robinson and Danny McBride — act like the penis-obsessed frat boys they often play, this time using their real identities. Or you can see it as a horror movie, since it spares no gore in presenting a biblical end-of-days scenario wherein L.A. gets fire and brimstone not intended for a standard Hollywood script. The film is the feature directing debut of Rogen and his friend and frequent co-writer Evan Goldberg. As the lads get serious about their situation, they also get funnier, acting out their neuroses but also performing an impromptu sequel to Pineapple Express, the stoner comedy that several of them co-starred in.

PETER HOWELL

Room 237

Director. Rodney Ascher

Stars. Bill Blakemore, Geoffrey Cocks, Juli Kearns

●●●●○

Rodney Ascher's entertaining doc Room 237 demonstrates how diverse are the freaks who think there are hidden messages in The Shining. A mixed bag of professors, artists, musicians and journalists, they believe Kubrick planted secret shout-outs in The Shining: coded clues about the Nazi Holocaust, the Native American genocide, homoerotic sexual urges and the "faked" Apollo 11 moon landing. There's a room for all of them in The Shining's Overlook Hotel — and not just titular Room 237, Spook Central for the film's ghoulies. Many of the doc's revelations can be explained as continuity mistakes by Kubrick or by simple coincidence.

PETER HOWELL

The Situation. Details of his painkiller addiction and recovery in his words

On Jersey Shore, Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino was always happy to be hitting the club, fielding grenades and getting his GTL on. But off-camera, the star struggled with an issue millions of Americans quietly try to keep to themselves: prescription painkiller addiction.

Since going public with his battle last year, Sorrentino helped launch ResetReality.com, a resource for anyone struggling with addiction. Sorrentino confided in us about his addiction, and how he overcame it.

The start of a problem

"Obviously it didn't start as an addiction. I was initially just hurt — it was probably an existing injury from when I was younger. I injured myself on (Dancing with the Stars) — I threw my partner over my shoulder and I hurt my lower back and neck. And then I was prescribed by a doctor a medication which was an opioid prescription painkiller."

Rock bottom

"My turning point was on one of my appearance tours, abroad in Australia, (when) I couldn't get my medication I was prescribed. They don't even actually make it in Australia. At that time there was just no way for me to get it and I proceeded to go into probably the early stages of withdrawal. I had an event to go to, and my family's with me, friends are with me, and we're ready to go to the event and I'm in bed, and I said, 'I'm not going.' And they said, 'Mike, we gotta go, there's a car outside. We'll help you get ready.' The only thing on my mind that I can think of was, 'I don't care, I'm not going. I don't feel well. Tell them I was sick.' And once I saw the looks on my family's faces — disappointment, frustration, helplessness — I realized I put that there. I didn't want to be the one to hurt my family in any way. And I was like, 'Wow, I'm causing this, and what's really causing this is my addiction.' I was like, 'If I can't even get dressed for this, how am I gonna do the next Jersey Shore? How am I gonna have a wife and kid?"

The Situation. GETTY IMAGES

At rehab

"I remember on the plane to rehab, it was Utah — I just thought it was gonna be like a country club; but it wasn't. It was probably the most traumatic experience in my life, because once you start to detox and become yourself again all these feelings come back that maybe I was trying to hide or maybe I didn't want them to be there, as well as the good feelings, and you're overwhelmed."

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The Head is back and Korn can still make music

New album. Band isn't worried about album sales

JOHN PLICHTER
Metro

Jonathan Davis isn't too concerned about creating a commercially successful album these days.

"We don't get worked up over that anymore since we've already established ourselves," says the Korn singer. "If you want to buy our record, buy it. If not, that's cool. We're not worried about labels anymore because we always know we can put a record out. Back in the day we definitely felt that pressure. But not anymore."

Their new album is The Paradigm Shift, and the band has recently gone through a paradigm shift of its own with the return of founding member Brian "Head" Welch, whose deep detuned guitars first helped put Korn in the enviable position of not worrying about who buys their albums.

How did the return of Brian "Head" Welch come about?

He showed up at a show we were playing at Carolina Rebellion, and we asked him to come onstage and play a song with us. When he did, the crowd was so emotional. People were crying and so much s— was going on that I think he realized it was time to come back. … It's like he never left. It's been really great.

You worked with producer Don Gilmore on this album, who has been known for working with a lot of poppier acts like Avril Lavigne and Sugar Ray, to name a few. How was it to work with him?

We really, really liked working with Don. It was a lot of fun. At first he was a little hard to read, but we broke him down through the process. That's when he started acting like a kid and having fun with us.

Being a band for 20 years now, how has your audience evolved over the years?

I think our audience has grown with us. But then also, we have a lot of new fans too. We see a lot of kids in the crowd as well as older people, so it's really cool.

Jonathan Davis. GETTY IMAGES

Miley Cyrus

Miley's like the Pixies, but with more tongue

While everyone else is obsessing over her awards show antics and the breakup of her engagement, Miley Cyrus is worried about her legacy. "There are albums that people still are listening to, like Michael Jackson's Bad, because it's so f—ing dope. I want people to listen to my album like that," she tells Rolling Stone. "From the time I was 16 until I was 18, the Pixies is all I listened to. And I'm going to be that artist to so many people, so I want to make sure my record is the best it can be. I'm trying to set a new standard for pop music."

Want to know Katy Perry's inner thoughts? It's all in her music

Katy Perry went through some pretty dark times following her split from ex-husband Russell Brand, writing one of her new songs, By the Grace of God, about the time she found herself on the bathroom floor considering suicide, she tells Billboard magazine.

"That song is evident of how tough it really was at a certain point," she says.

"I asked myself, 'Do I want to endure? Should I consider living?' All the songs are real-life moments. I can only write autobiographically. I put all the evidence in the music. I tell my fans if they want to know the real truth about stuff, just listen to the songs."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Girls just wanna have fun

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News in New York

If I were a religious person, this might be my holy trinity of lady comedy: Lena Dunham, indie darling; Mindy Kaling, taking the broadcast mainstream by storm; and Tina Fey, overlord comedy queen supreme. On Saturday night, all three of them came together.

Well, sort of. Lena and Mindy came together in L.A. to watch the Saturday Night Live premiere, and Tina Fey came together with herself to make fun of Lena.

The 30 Rock star appeared in a spoof of Dunham's HBO show Girls, playing Blerta, a new Albanian roommate horrified by how spoiled these rich American girls are. It's pretty funny (and possibly also a nod to former SNL writer Simon Rich, whose novella in the New Yorker had a similar premise). Luckily, Dunham wasn't offended: Mindy Project star Kaling posted a pic on Instagram of her enjoying the sketch.

"Original Girl enjoying Blerta on #snl's Girls at my house," she wrote.

"The SNL parody of Girls was a true honour," Lena later tweeted. "Very excited about the current lineup of SNL ladies. They are funny like whoa." Agreed. Especially new girl Noel Wells, who does a spot-on Lena impression.

Roman Polanski

Geimer forgives Polanski in new memoir

While many still want Roman Polanski brought to justice for allegedly drugging and raping Samantha Geimer when she was 13 years old, Geimer herself says in a new memoir, the Girl, that she's forgiven him. "As different as our lives have been, we do share a common sense of battle fatigue when it comes to the court system and the media," she writes. "We've both been punished. We both want to move on. We both might be considered victims." And she insists her forgiving Polanski was the right thing to do: "If you go through your life carrying hate in your heart, you really only hurt yourself," she writes. "I didn't forgive him for him, I did it for me."

Twitter

@RedHourBen
I can't believe it's gone.

@WhitneyCummings
Watching the Breaking Bad finale without having seen any of the series. I have some questions

@TheRealRoseanne
May it please ascended masters to aid me 2 reverse the decree against the ppl

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Elisha Dacey

Half Off: Eating your stress

Metro Winnipeg editor Elisha Dacey has teamed up with fitness professional Jordan Cieciwa and registered nutritionist Theresa Albert. Dacey wants to lose half of her body weight and has been writing about it in her online blog, Half Off (metronews.ca/half-off).

With an unexpected gallbladder surgery a few weeks ago and moving to a new house last week, Dacey has been seriously stressed.

"There was no food in the house, and everything was packed along with my exercise equipment and scale — I couldn't even weigh myself," she said.

But Dacey's determined to not gain weight.

What did the experts advise?

Albert offered tips on how to make healthy fast food choices.

"When we went to Papa Murphys Take 'N' Bake Pizza, our favourite pizza place, we ordered the thin-crust pizza," says Dacey.

Cieciwa also asked Elisha to try to fit in a few fitness walks between unpacking — and to shine up her weights when she unpacked them and get ready to start the program again.

YLVA VAN BUUREN/FOR METRO

Oatmeal: The return of eight power combos

Food choices. The hot breakfast is back — we'll soon be hitting low temperatures, so it's OK for us to live off oats. We share our top combinations

ROMINA MCGUINNESS
wellness@metronews.ca

Skipping breakfast isn't going to make you skinny.

Dietician Patricia Bannan, author of Eat Right When Time is Tight, tells Metro that it is essential.

"You've been fasting for at least eight hours, so you need to eat within two hours in order to boost your metabolism, stabilize blood sugar levels, and improve your mood," she explains.

"A good rule of thumb is that a breakfast should be at least 200 calories and contain some protein and fibre for sustained energy."

So, because we love oatmeal and we hope we've convinced you to eat up in the morning, we've teamed up with Bannan and came up with eight awesome recipes that will make you want to enjoy it.

Just not too much of it — hence the portion sizes. You can make your oatmeal with either water or milk (rice, almond, cow) or half milk and half water.

200 grams cooked oatmeal
1 tbsp almond butter
1/4 sliced banana
1 tbsp chocolate chips

200 grams cooked oatmeal
1 tbsp maple syrup
1 strip chopped bacon
cinnamon to taste

200 grams cooked oatmeal
1/5 chopped avocado
2 tsp olive oil
1 fried egg
30 grams smoked salmon

200 grams cooked oatmeal
1 tbsp cardamom
1/2 cup berry compote
1/4 cup dried chopped cherries
1 tbsp walnuts

200 grams cooked oatmeal
1/2 chopped apple
2 tbsp toasted almonds
cinnamon & brown sugar to taste

200 grams cooked oatmeal
2 tbsp chopped pistachios
2 tbsp chopped figs
brown sugar to taste

200 grams cooked oatmeal
1/4 cup vanilla yogurt
1/2 chopped peach
2 tbsp chopped glazed pecans
cinnamon to taste

200 grams cooked oatmeal
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2 tbsp toasted walnuts
1 shaved radish

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Be aware. A proper self-examination is the key to early detection

Dr. Marisa Weiss strongly recommends performing breast self-exams once a month several days after your period. ISTOCK

LAURA GOLDMAN
Metro World News in New York

Dr. Marisa Weiss calls herself a dual citizen in the world of breast cancer. Weiss, a practising breast-cancer oncologist at Lankenau Medical Center near Philadelphia, is founder and president of BreastCancer.org, the world's most utilized online medical resource for breast health. Since 2010, she is also a breast-cancer survivor.

Weiss — who wrote the book Taking Care of Your "Girls": A Breast Health Guide for Girls, Teens, and In-Betweens — strongly recommends performing breast self-exams once a month several days after your period, despite some controversy about their effectiveness. She urges women to be their own best advocates.

"Early detection gives you the best shot of treating the cancer," Weiss says. "Breast cancer, in the early stages, has no symptoms. It doesn't let you know it is there."

Weiss suggests beginning the breast self-exam by inspecting your breasts closely in the mirror.

"You should take notice of changes in contour, rashes, indentations, nipple discharge and if one breast is bigger than the other," says Weiss.

Then, you should examine your breast either by moving the fingers up and down, travelling from the left to the right as if mowing a lawn. Or, start at the nipple and move your fingers outward in a spiral. Examine areas close to your breasts too, from the top of the collarbone, to the armpit, to the top of the abdomen.

"Each quadrant or neighbourhood of the breast should feel differently," says Weiss. "The upper-right area, near the armpit, tends to have the most prominent lumps and bumps. The lower half of the breast feels like a sandy or pebbly beach. The area around the nipple feels like large grains and another part may feel like lumpy oatmeal."

The goal of a regular exam is to familiarize yourself with how the various neighbourhoods of your breast normally feel and look.

"Does something stand out as different from the rest (like a rock on a sandy beach)? Has anything changed? Bring any changes in your breasts that last over a full month's cycle to the attention of your doctor," says Weiss.

Why the rise?

Weiss partially attributes the recent rise in breast cancer to women having children later.

- "Breasts are not fully formed until you have a full-term pregnancy. Nature gave breasts the job of producing milk. They are immature until they get a job," explains Weiss. Until they are fully formed, breasts are more susceptible to the hormones they come in contact with.

Skip that second drink

Along with self-exams, Weiss suggests lowering your risk of alcohol consumption to reduce your risk of breast cancer.

- "It's best to reduce consumption to five or fewer drinks per week, says Weiss. "The risk of breast cancer increases with the amount of alcohol consumed."

An uphill climb: Battling cancer one foot at a time

Another mountain to climb. For three breast-cancer survivors, a trek to Machu Picchu not only raised $65K, but proved they could find their inner strength

VAWN HIMMELSBACH
life@metronews.ca

Trekking the Andes in Peru to the fabled Machu Picchu isn't for the faint of heart. Steep climbs of up to 15,000 feet and camping in the cold would put anyone to the test.

But there's a reason why it's one of the most popular treks in the world: Winding your way through lush cloud forest past dramatic snow-capped peaks to reach the Lost City of the Incas is, for many, the experience of a lifetime. It's more than a trek — it's a pilgrimage.

And for three women who survived breast cancer, it was a pilgrimage more personal than most. Last May, they joined a group of Canadians who trekked through the Lares Valley to Machu Picchu as part of a fundraising challenge organized by Charity Challenge and supported by the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF).

The expedition raised more than $65,000 for breast-cancer research, but it also pushed these women to once again find their inner strength when faced with another mountain to climb.

About Charity Challenge

- U.K.-based Charity Challenge, which recently launched in Canada, operates more than 100 fundraising expeditions for 1,500 people each year.
- Anyone can join any trip to raise money for any charity they're passionate about.
- For more info, visit charitychallenge.ca.

Robin Ferguson

62-year-old Robin Ferguson was diagnosed with breast cancer in March 2005. At the time, she was training for her third marathon.

"I didn't want to go through radiation," she said. "I looked at it like a wart — just get it off."

During this time, she kept hearing a song on the radio by country crooner Terri Clark, called I Wanna Do It All. "I'd be out running and that song would come on," she said. "And I wanted to do it all. I wasn't willing to give up — that was never an option."

Ferguson decided to have a mastectomy. In May of that same year, she walked a half-marathon. By January 2006, she was running marathons again.

With two daughters and four sisters (one of whom has also survived breast cancer), Ferguson makes a point to perform fundraising each year, including Run for the Cure. But seeing Machu Picchu had always been on her bucket list, so when the opportunity arose to participate in Charity Challenge, she jumped at the chance.

One of her sisters joined her on the trek and provided support during the tough parts. And the toughest part was climbing the stairs at the hotel the day she arrived in Cusco, Peru — when she was hit by the effects of the altitude and questioned her ability to do the trek.

"You think, 'I can't breathe; can I make the mountain if I can't manage the stairs?' I never expected that," Ferguson said.

Despite the challenges, she had several aha moments along the way — such as re-discovering her inner strength. "It ended up being more spiritual than I expected it to be," she said. "Our guide was a spiritual soul who believed in the power of nature and the mountains."

For Ferguson, nothing was comparable to the feeling of accomplishment after ascending 15,000 feet, reaching the Sun Gates and looking out at Machu Picchu — something, she says, most people only dream about.

Mary Ann Empson

For Mary Ann Empson, 60, the Alores Valley was a spiritual place — which she wasn't expecting. "I don't normally say that about things," she said. "It was actually quite overwhelming when we reached the Sun Gates. It's such a beautiful spot."

Empson was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1996. She then went through the whole gamut — radiation, chemo and surgery — over the course of a year.

"It gives you a bit of a reality check," she said.

While she wasn't overweight, Empson was a self-described couch potato. "I started running and really turned my life around," she said.

Empson, now retired from the University of Alberta's faculty of law, participated in another fundraiser, which involved climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania — but Machu Picchu was always on her bucket list.

"Sometimes something presents itself and you realize this was meant to be," she said. "I love doing these kinds of challenges; something out of the ordinary, where you push yourself."

Despite that, she wasn't exactly comfortable getting out of her comfort zone. "It was tough, climbing in and out of that little tent at the end of a long day, no long showers … not having your Starbucks coffee; things we take for granted that all of a sudden are gone."

The peace and serenity of her surroundings, interacting with the locals she met along the way and the support of the group — people from across Canada who all shared a common link with breast cancer — got her through those tough parts.

The local children, in particular, captivated her. "The children are so genuine; there's a real innocence," she said. Doing this trek — and other challenges over the years — has taught Empson perseverance.

"I know that I have more willpower and tenacity that I maybe originally thought," she said. "(You have to) dig deep, get down in there and give it all you've got."

Raziya Sachedina

Doing the trek brought up a big fear for 68-year-old Raziya Sachedina — would she be able to finish it? As part of another fundraiser, she had attempted to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, but made it only two-thirds of

Upcoming fundraisers

- CBCF is recruiting for a Cuban biking challenge in February 2014 and a trekking challenge in late 2014 — possibly the Great Wall of China or Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania (cbcf.org).
- Rethink Breast Cancer (a movement for young women affected by breast cancer) is organizing a trekking challenge to Machu Picchu from Sept. 5 to 13, 2014 (rethinkbreastcancer.com).

Challenge yourself!

Get off the couch and on to a challenge! Charity Challenge is offering Metro readers a $75 discount off the cost of a trip if they use "METRO" as a promotional code when booking. This offer is valid through the month of October.

Ain't no mountain high enough: Three breast-cancer survivors joined a group of Canadians who trekked to Machu Picchu as part of a fundraising challenge. The expedition raised more than $65,000 for breast-cancer research, but it also pushed these women to once again find their inner strength. CONTRIBUTED

Reach for the sky

Conquering my fears to fight cancer

I think it's the fear of losing control.

Snakes are fine. So is public speaking. But heights? They terrify me.

So you can imagine how I felt when our company president "volun-told" me for a breast cancer fundraiser that involved walking around the outside of the CN Tower.

I'm OK in elevators and balconies — the fact that it's enclosed makes me feel safe. But I get tense when escalators have open sides and make a point of staying away from high ledges.

But cancer scares me more. I have seen people who lead healthy lifestyles get it. In August, we lost a Metro co-worker to cancer at age 36.

I'm told I'm a good fundraiser and I believe fighting our fears leads to personal growth. So I agreed to reach for the sky — literally.

So up the CN Tower I went last month, making sure not to step on the glass tiles in the elevator.

Up top, our group of fundraisers stood in a small room with glass doors while our safety harnesses were connected to a guide rail. The employees all joked that "it was their first day on the job."

Then, the doors opened. The wind gusted in and the temperature dropped. I tensed up. My hands became clammy and I tightened my grip on the harness.

When asked to step out on the ledge, I looked at the floor. That made it worse. The EdgeWalk floor is a grate; you can see the ground below. I stared at the CN Tower wall instead. My fellow fundraisers were

Fernando Carneiro on the edge 365 metres above the city. CONTRIBUTED

invited to "hang their toes over Toronto." I passed. Just being there felt like personal progress.

Over the course of the walk, I became bold enough to let go of the harness and enjoy the view. That was my personal limit that morning.

Back inside, as I was unharnessed, I felt my entire body hurt from being tense — it was as though I had been tenderized with a meat mallet. Yet, I started to feel a little daring. I immediately wanted to do it again.

Yes, it was mentally tough, but I plan to return. And this time I'll hang my toes over Toronto because I feel stronger now than I did before I faced my fear of heights.

And thank you to my colleagues at Metro, who helped me raise more than $1,600 for the EdgeWalk Challenge for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure.

I suspect they did such a great job fundraising so they wouldn't have to do the EdgeWalk themselves.

FERNANDO CARNEIRO/METRO

FOR A VIDEO OF FERNANDO'S SKY-HIGH ADVENTURE, VISIT METRONEWS.CA

the way before altitude sickness got the best of her. So she had something to prove to herself by going on this challenge.

"It was sitting in the back of my mind … and that was what took me onto the hike," she said.

Sachedina was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1993. "When I look back now, I think of it as an opportunity to really change my life," she said.

Her treatment involved a bilateral mastectomy, chemotherapy and reconstructive surgery. The same year she finished chemo, her husband passed away. Those experiences led her on a "therapeutic adventure," which involved becoming more physically active and to "not keep wallowing over stuff that I have no control over."

That path involved fundraising for breast cancer research, including Run for the Cure. "I feel very fortunate to be alive," said Sachedina. "All of these activities with CBCF have helped me move on."

While she was determined to do the trek, the challenge for her was "the amazing number of steps you have to climb," she said. "On a practice hike before we started the actual trek, I fell. I sprained my ankle; I took the fall on my knee. But that wasn't going to hold me back."

Getting to the Sun Gates involved climbing 2,800 almost-vertical steps. "I had to do that on all fours and it was raining and it was slippery," said Sachedina.

It was the group that kept her going. "They cheered me on, they supported me in every way they could."

And, for her, carrying on despite a sprained ankle was worth it. "It was unbelievable — the beauty of the place, the serenity that you experience when you get to the Sun Gates," she said.

Sachedina proved something to herself by finishing the trek — she found a sense of strength that she describes as unbelievable. "I feel I can do anything now."

Communication. How to talk openly, honestly with your kids about cancer

When it comes to talking to kids about cancer, parents need to allow for questions and open communication. ISTOCK

ANISA ARSENAULT
Metro World News in New York

As a child psychiatrist, Dr. Lynn Bornfriend had been discussing different issues with kids for years. But her last two years at the Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) in Philadelphia brought a new struggle to light: the difficulty parents with cancer face in discussing their diagnosis with their children.

"It seemed that the parents (with cancer) had an extra burden: How do I protect my child? How do I plan for my child?" Bornfriend tells Metro. "And very quickly we became aware that this is something we have to spend more time on and come up with more resources for."

According to Bornfriend, the first hurdle is changing the outlook of parents who believe a discussion will only frighten their child. "Children are very perceptive, and they know when something is wrong, even if you're not speaking about it," she says. "So if you don't tell them what is going on, they're likely to think that it's worse than it really is, or that they're the cause of the problem."

Bornfriend's recommended course of action is honesty. "Your degree of honesty is tailored to what their developmental stage is, and their cognitive abilities," she says. Essentially, the transparency of your discussion will vary with the age of your kids.

Preschoolers need to be prepped for the physical changes they will see in a parent.

"You have to make clear to them that mommy or daddy is pretty sick," Bornfriend says. "You make them aware of some of the things they may see: mommy or daddy may be laying on the couch more. You talk to them about how you've made a choice, you're going to get treatment and you have a plan. You explain to them what it is and what it is not."

But Bornfriend warns not to get too caught up in details. "Young kids take what they can hear and then they're ready to move on," she explains. "You're ready to be explaining about chemotherapy and radiation and they're gone."

Teenagers, on the other hand, require much more transparency. "You have to give them specific information because they're going to have specific questions and they want to know what's going on in a clear way," Bornfriend says. Additionally, emotions may run high. "There may be a very dramatic response to your news, and you sort of have to batten down the hatches. Or they're going to want their own privacy in the way they deal with things."

Your teenager may not want to talk to you. Maintaining normalcy is important, Bornfriend says. "You have to make clear to the kids that you expect that they continue to meet their responsibilities," she says. "There will continue to be consequences if they don't."

Bornfriend explains normalcy also means that kids get to be kids. "It's OK for them to have fun, it's necessary for them to have fun," she says. "School-aged kids especially are very into rules and order, and cancer treatment can be very disruptive to them because it changes. But use other people — family members, friends — so that their schedules persist."

Parents need to allow for questions and open communication. "The worst thing is when kids are trapped by themselves and alone in their minds and don't feel that they can ask a question," Bornfriend says. "We tell parents that even if tears are rolling down your face while you're having that conversation with your child, it's better than not having that conversation."

Greasy Grilled Cheese no more

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

I love grilled cheese sandwiches but they are always laden with fat from the butter spread all over the bread, not to mention the high-fat cheeses used.

I have filled this sandwich with veggies, chicken and Monterey cheese.

Instead of butter, the outside of the bread is just sprayed with vegetable oil.

This recipe serves three. ROSE REISMAN

Ingredients

- 1 small red bell pepper, top and seeds removed and cut into 4 wedges
- 3 oz boneless skinless chicken breast
- 6 slices of bread
- 3/4 cup grated Monterey Jack or aged cheddar cheese (2 1/4 oz/65 g)
- 1/3 cup sliced avocado
- 3 tbsp chopped cilantro

Sauce

- 3 tbsp light mayonnaise
- 1 1/2 tsp chopped chipotle pepper or jalapenos

1. Sandwich: Preheat oven to 425 F (220 C). Line small baking sheet with foil sprayed with vegetable oil. Roast bell pepper until charred (about 20 minutes). Cool, then remove the skin and slice thin.

2. Meanwhile, either grill or sauté the chicken breast just until it is just no longer pink or the temperature reaches 165 F (74 C). Cool, then slice.

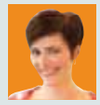
3. Sauce: Combine mayo and chipotle. Spread over bread.

4. Over 3 slices of bread, divide chicken, cheese, pepper, avocado and cilantro. Place other bread slices overtop.

5. Spray oil over outside of the sandwiches and grill in grill pan on medium heat for at least 5 minutes, turning halfway just until browned and the cheese begins to melt.

Health Solutions

Chickpeas are here to stay



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Chickpeas are the new chia — the health food of the future — and with good reason. They are easily grown, full of protein and as versatile as they are delicious.

Tossed into pasta or salad right from the can or sautéed in any seasoning from Indian curry to Lebanese lemon and mint, chickpeas add fibre, minerals, protein and crunch to any meal.

Hummus is a key food in today's cart and, according to Susan Niczowski, founder of Canada's own Summer Fresh Salads, it can be used in countless more ways than simply as a dip. Think about using a variety of flavours of hummus to:

- Spread onto chicken or fish before baking.
- Thin with vinegar and lemon juice to make a salad dressing.
- Spread into a sandwich in place of high fat, no fibre, no protein mayo.
- Stir into an omelette for a flavour flair.
- Mix with grated cheese and marinated artichokes and warm as a bread spread.

The diet leader, no matter which study you read, is the Mediterranean diet and it indicates more beans, less meat and much more fibre. Here is your single-handed helper.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

SISTERS IN SPIRIT
In loving memory of our grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters, aunties and cousins.
THE ISSUE:
There are more than 600 known cases of missing or murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada; a group that makes up less than 2% of the Canadian population. If compared to the rest of the population their death and disappearance rate would be equivalent to over 18,000 Canadian women and girls missing or murdered in the past thirty years.
Please help us honour our missing and murdered aboriginal women on
OCTOBER 4TH
BY MARCHING AND RALLYING @ 1:30 PM
At Stephen Ave Mall and 3rd St. SW, marching to Olympic Plaza for a 2:00 Vigil
Please join us in Ceremony to honour and remember their lives..
Mayor Naheed Nenshi will proclaim October 4th SISTERS IN SPIRIT DAY.
AWOTAAN.ORG
TO SUPPORT THE END OF VIOLENCE AGAINST ABORIGINAL WOMEN & A CALL FOR A NATIONAL INQUIRY

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News worth sharing.

Wingmen for hire: Find love through fake friends

New-age dating solution. These shameless, selfless 'lovepreneurs' can help shy, undiscovered catches out there meet new people and form relationships

KIERON MONKS
Metro World News

Thomas Edwards, founder of The Professional Wingman, with a client. CONTRIBUTED

You're hot, funny and successful, but no one knows because you don't know how to meet people. Enter the wingmen: romantic fixers who play the role of best friend to get you started with the perfect partner.

"It's three things that make a wingman," says Thomas Edwards, 28, founder of U.S. firm The Professional Wingman.

"You have to be selfless enough to go to any lengths for a client, shameless enough not to worry about rejection, and you have to be able to make them seem amazing."

For $125 an hour, Edwards and his team take clients to likely social venues and get them talking to desirable targets, before providing real-time feedback on how to improve their game.

"Whether clients are aged 21 or 63, there are behaviour patterns that stop them making connections. Our job is to break them down and build them up again — often their closest friends don't recognize them after." The "lovepreneur" started the business to get over his own heartache and has developed a stellar reputation, with many clients now married; Barack Obama is among his Twitter followers.

Edwards' business model has inspired similar companies across the world, including services for women and gay people. While online dating has become a multi-billion dollar industry, Edwards believes it benefits rather than competes with him.

"It creates a need for skills like mine. If you don't talk to real people your personal skills start to atrophy."

The Positive Psychology Institute is convinced, reporting that wingmen "help to alleviate nerves or pressure ... and give perspective on the date".

User reviews are also positive, with feedback thanking Edwards for "brilliant solutions" and "awesome advice."

It seems the wingmen will be flying high for a time yet — so don't be alarmed if one flies over during a romantic dinner.

The wingman's creed

"You have to be selfless enough to go to any lengths for a client, shameless enough not to worry about rejection, and you have to be able to make them seem amazing."

Thomas Edwards, the founder of U.S. firm The Professional Wingman
On what the job of a pro wingman entails

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Let's go out to the kitchen, and have ourselves a sustainable snack

I know what I want and I want it now.
Convention points to a new generation of savvy but stretched-for-time grocery shoppers

I long to make a nutritious feast, but one that won't occupy my time in the least. ISTOCK

Gluten-free foods and ethnic offerings are expected to continue their march onto store shelves as grocers also look to sustainability and ponder how to deal with online ordering.

Ethnic products have been top of mind for retailers for several years. In the past, "if you wanted to get those products you had to go to a traditional ethnic grocer and now it's switched where you've now got the large players putting it in and making it permanent sections," Tom Barlow, president and CEO of the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers, said ahead of a mammoth conference and trade show featuring about 500 exhibitors.

"Even non-ethnic Canadians are looking for those products and have introduced them into their diets."

The Grocery Innovations Canada event running Monday and Tuesday at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre offers a glimpse into the future of emerging food products Canadian consumers could soon see at the supermarket.

People want ease of preparation, noted Barlow, like the salad that's three-quarters made so they can add the remainder of the ingredients or an Indian or Italian dish in which the sauce is prepared and can simply be heated and combined with a protein and rice or pasta.

"It's the balance of the new generation. Mom cooked and they really didn't grow up cooking and now you get this explosion of the Food Network and the foodie culture and how do I get there and how do I do it relatively fast and efficient because we're all time-starved."

Barlow, who retired from Coca-Cola after 35 years, including six as Canadian president, expected there would be considerable interest in a panel discussion on online grocery ordering.

"A lot of retailers are trying to figure out, 'How do I compete? Do I get into this? Or how do I manage around this?'" said Barlow, who took the helm of the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers when longtime president John Scott stepped down earlier this year.

"And the challenge has been for traditional grocery, consumers really don't mind, (they think), 'I'm putting a couple cases of Coke on there and I'm throwing on some Pampers and a Tide.' When I get into produce or I get into bread it becomes a little more personal and feel and touch plays such a big part.

"You see it at the tomato bin. Not that one, not that one, OK that one. So how are you going to do it if you're letting someone else do it for you?"

Retailers have long tried to second guess what consumers are looking for.

"That's always been a bit of a conundrum between what they say they want and what they actually purchase when it becomes time," Barlow said. "As the baby boomers get older they're starting to be a lot more focused on 'What am I eating? What am I putting into myself?'

"Even the traditional guys are starting to expand. We just heard that Weston is coming out with a gluten-free bread kind of in mass production so it kind of shows you the change in the consumer."

CFIG represents more than 4,000 independent grocery retailers across the country who face considerable competition from chain stores.

"The guys that are doing very well are the ones that have identified that they really need to create that difference in their stores ... investing in the local produce and that unique opportunity or a meat offering that's unique in 21-day hung meat that perhaps you can't get anywhere else or investing in the bakery side or ready-to-prepare meals.

"The guys that are doing it well are shrinking kind of the inside of the store which has been traditional grocery and expanding on the fresh side."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Get outta my belly!

"As the baby boomers get older they're starting to be a lot more focused on, 'What am I eating? What am I putting into myself?'"

Tom Barlow
President and CEO of the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers

Beating the best-before

- Tom Barlow, president and CEO of the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers, noted that researchers and growers have been working on ways to extend the life of some products, such as new strains of berries that have a longer growing season. Artisanal items such as cheese are of growing interest too.

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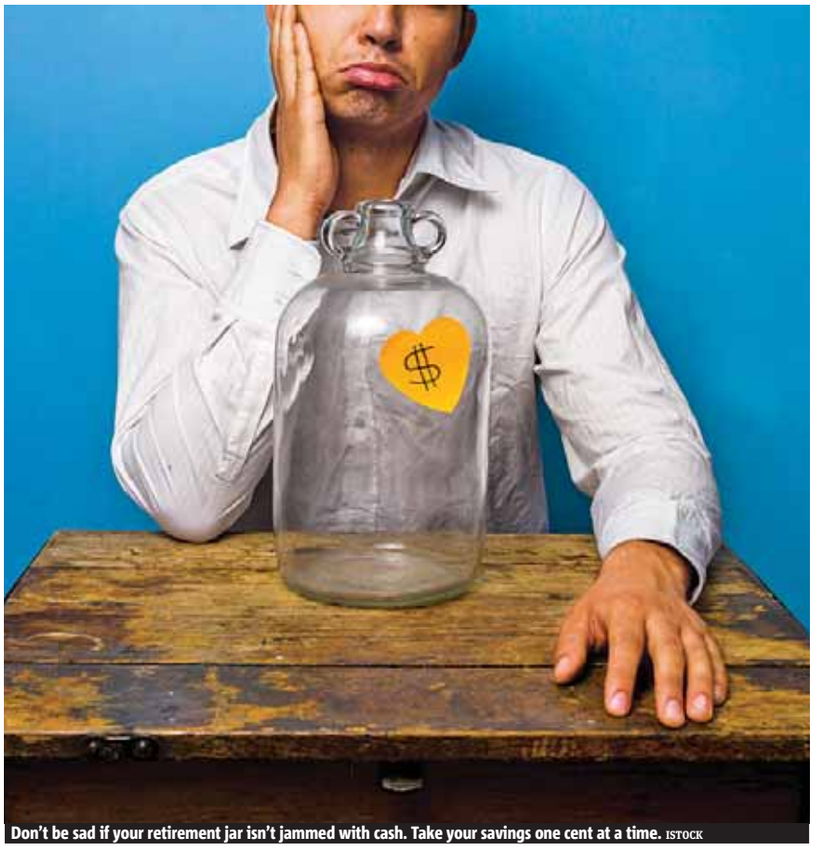

Don't be sad if your retirement jar isn't jammed with cash. Take your savings one cent at a time. ISTOCK

Pause at the piggy bank: Slow but steady wins the race to retirement

A full wallet après-work. It may not be all be yachts and time-share, but there are ways to assure that you relax into retirement

JON STEIN
Metro World News

If your retirement account is more goose egg than nest egg, you're not alone — especially if you're in your 30s or 40s.

Between 2007 and 2010, Gen Xers lost nearly half their wealth — an average of $33,000 per household — according to a recent study from Pew Charitable Trusts. Ouch. Luckily, it's not too late to turn things around. Let's get started.

Don't think about saving

You may not be broke, but living in a major city will stretch most paychecks. So don't focus on spending less right now, but saving first. The best way to do that? Make it automatic. Behavioural finance research shows that if you set up a regular, automatic transfer to your savings or retirement account — or have your employer do it for you — you'll be amazed at how quickly your savings will add up.

Glad you're nodding! Now do something. Set a reminder on your calendar or phone (research shows these alerts help, too).

Be smart about where you save

If you have a pension plan or something similar at work, start saving here, no matter what. Save as much as you can, especially if your employer offers a match. If you don't have access through your employer — many people don't — you can open your own RRSP.

Take the long view

If investing your hard-earned money into stocks, bonds and mutual or index funds sounds scary, that's a natural fear.

- Here's what you need to look for: Low fees, index funds (which are also typically low- cost), and no "get-rich-quick" promises Above all, don't let uncertainty stop you from moving forward.

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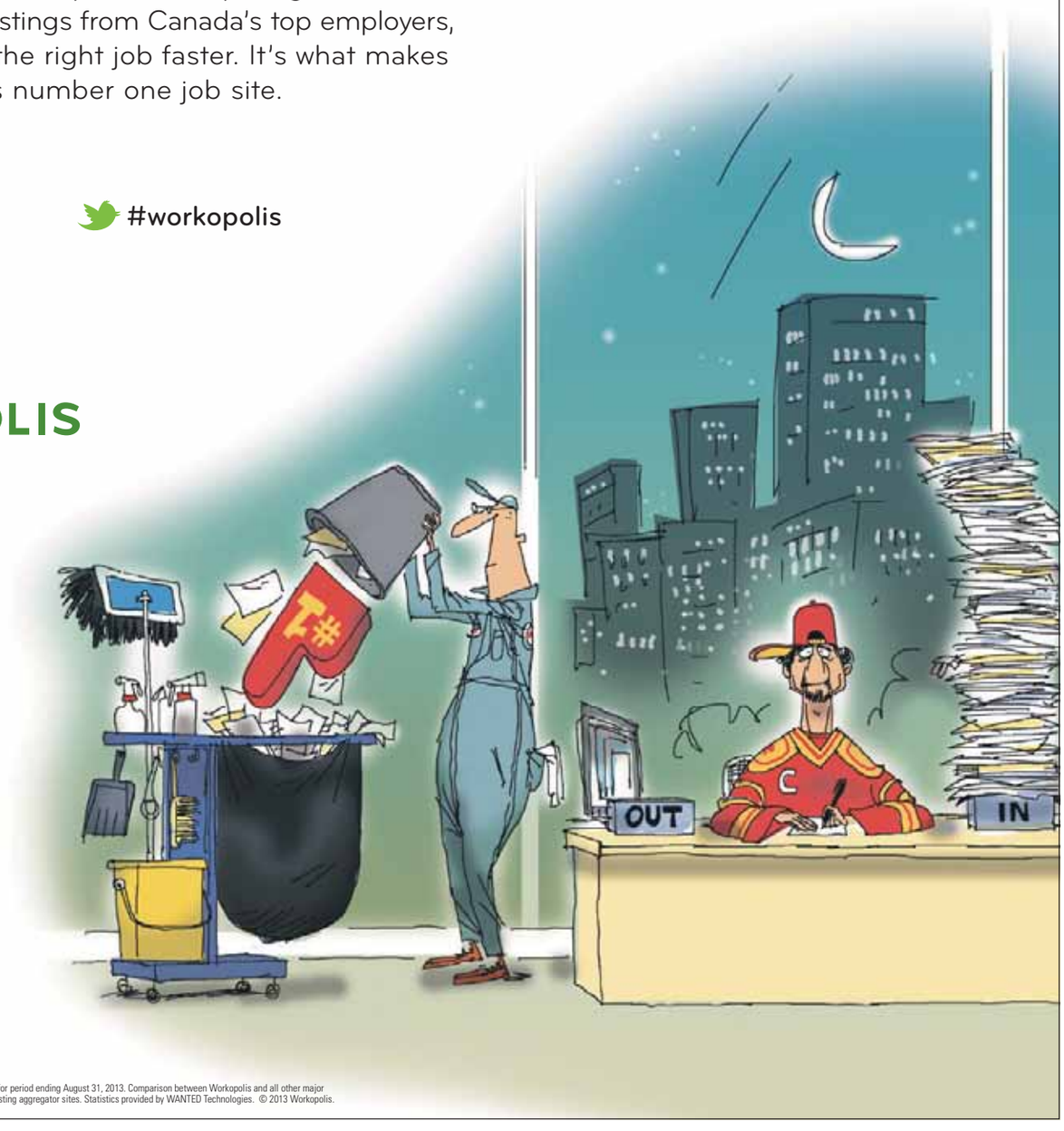

"Number one job site" based on six-month average online job postings for period ending August 31, 2013. Comparison between Workopolis and all other major paid online job boards. Does not include online classified sites or job posting aggregator sites. Statistics provided by WANTED Technologies. © 2013 Workopolis.

Rule ratification

Players OK changes to icing

Hybrid icing will be in effect for the start of the regular season after it was approved by the players.

The NHLPA gave the go-ahead for the rule change that makes icing a race to an imaginary line across the faceoff dots instead of the puck, which was given a trial run during the pre-season. The goal is to prevent serious injuries, like the one that sidelined Carolina Hurricanes defenceman Joni Pitkanen for the entire season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

All-star rebranding

Raps GM hopes to thank Drake later when nothing is the same in T.O.

There's a new hip face of the franchise, a new look in the works, and in 2016 they'll host basketball's biggest party.

The Toronto Raptors officially announced Monday that they'll host the 2016 NBA all-star game and unveiled homegrown rap star Drake as their new "global ambassador." They also confirmed they'll have a new look and new colours — but not a new name — for the 2015-16 season.

It's all in an effort to turn around Canada's floundering basketball franchise, and what Tim Leiweke, the president and CEO of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment Ltd., called the beginning of a "new age" for the Raptors.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wild-card tiebreaker

Rays headed back to the playoffs

David Price, Evan Longoria and the Tampa Bay Rays are going to playoffs again, getting there with a victory in their final regular-season game for the second time in three years.

They needed an extra game this time.

Price threw his fourth complete game of the season, Longoria had a two-run homer and the Rays beat the Texas Rangers 5-2 in the AL wild-card tiebreaker game Monday night, the 163rd game for both teams.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flames goalie Reto Berra lets in the game-winning overtime goal during pre-season action against the Coyotes on Wednesday. The Flames say they like Berra, of Switzerland, but they sent him to the AHL for more development in the North American game. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Flames rebuilding, but not folding

NHL. Calgary brass bet on fresh faces Monahan, Ramo, Baertschi to lead new squad's transition

A roster populated with young players trying to prove themselves in the NHL and a bulging wallet of salary-cap space are reasons for the Calgary Flames to feel optimistic on the eve of their NHL season.

General manager Jay Feaster and new president of hockey operations Brian Burke spoke to the media Monday ahead of Calgary's season-opener Thursday in Washington.

After four straight seasons of playoff-free hockey, few project the rebuilding Flames as contenders for the post-season in 2013-14.

Feaster and Burke were marketing a brand of hard, committed hockey that they believe will both entertain fans and put the Flames on the road to glory.

"As Jay has said repeatedly, we were a cap team with star players and did not have success," said Burke, who was hired Sept. 5. "We are in a different mode going forward. This is a transition that had to take place and is well under way.

"We're not prepared to concede we're going to struggle yet.... The issue for me is, do we have enough skill? We're going to find that out."

The average age of Calgary's opening-day roster announced Monday is more than a year younger than last season's. Teenage forward Sean Monahan, the sixth overall pick in this year's draft, will start his season with the Flames.

His entry-level contract kicks in after nine NHL games, so Calgary has until then to decide whether to keep Monahan, who turns 19 on Oct. 12, or return him to the Ontario Hockey League's Ottawa 67's.

"We will continue to monitor Sean's progress on a daily basis, we'll see how he stacks up, how the games come to him and what kind of ice time he gets," Feaster said.

"I don't think he has to play a lot or play a big role or play every game right away. We decide when those nine games will take place. They can be spread over the course of three months if we decide to do it."

Finnish goaltender Karri Ramo, 27, is Calgary's starter to open the season with veteran Joey MacDonald as his backup.

The Flames like Reto Berra's talent, but sent the Swiss product to their American Hockey League affiliate in Abbotsford, B.C., for more seasoning in the North American game.

"At present we think Karri Ramo is just slightly ahead of Reto," Feaster said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Roster roundup

- Veteran forward Mike Cammalleri will start the season on injured reserve because of a hand injury.
- With the acquisition of forward Joe Colborne from Toronto on Saturday, Calgary had 45 players under contract out of a league maximum of 50.
- Along with Berra, the Flames assigned defenceman Patrick Sieloff and forwards Roman Horak and Blair Jones to the AHL on Monday. Sieloff can turn pro at 19 because he was drafted out of the United States Hockey League, not the Canadian Hockey League.
- Winger Sven Baertschi, Calgary's first-round pick in 2011, also made the club's opening-day roster despite an inconsistent training camp for the 20-year-old.

4 SPORTS

Flames could cook up surprise year

THE HOCKEY NEWS
Brian Costello
calgary@metronews.ca

Curtis Glencross and the Flames may be in for a fight to prove the pundits wrong. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The pundits have spoken and Jay Feaster isn't listening. And why should he? What the so-called experts are saying isn't music to the ears of the Flames GM.

Virtually every media outlet and/or oddsmaker is targeting the Flames for last in the division, last in the conference, even last in the league. That's what a complete rebuild does to expectations. Personally, I think this low-budget team could surprise a lot of people. Not to the point it will challenge for a playoff spot, but enough to raise some eyebrows. I have the Flames finishing above Phoenix in the Pacific and wouldn't be surprised to see them finish above four or five teams league-wide.

Here's my thinking:

Prognosticators say Calgary's lack of proven goaltending is the cement-encased shoes that will drag the team to the bottom. But remember, the Flames received terrible goaltending from Miikka Kiprusoff last season so how can Karri Ramo be any worse? Ramo's credentials the past few seasons in the KHL are impressive. Critics may scoff that he's capable of even middling goaltending, but I think he'll open some eyes.

Feaster says he'll have a 23-man roster of players who have a complete buy-in on a team approach under coach Bob Hartley. In my opinion, that's his way of saying he wasn't getting as much from the likes of Jarome Iginla, Alex Tanguay and company in past seasons. I think the Flames will miss Iggy a lot less than any pundit expects. Let's face it, there were a lot of things Iginla didn't do well, especially as he slowed down in recent seasons. Calgary's new leadership personalities are by-example players like Mark Giordano and Curtis Glencross.

Every year there's a team or two that confounds the experts and plays above expectations — Ottawa last season, Nashville the year before. Maybe it's Calgary this season, maybe it isn't. But I'm saying the Flames finish closer to 25th than they do to 30th. It will mean a slightly lower draft pick in 2014, but will make for a less frustrating season in three or four years for Calgary fans.

Three Flames to watch

Karri Ramo

The former top prospect for the Tampa Bay Lightning has matured a lot since the early, struggling days in Florida. He'll be playing behind a defence that is among the most suspect in the league, but he'll win over fans in short order.

Mike Cammalleri

The Flames would be wise to load up Cammy with 25-plus minutes of ice time per night and overdose him with power-play duties. If he's scoring at a 30- to 40-goal rate, he'll command a first-round draft pick in return come trade deadline.

Sean Monahan

The arrival of Joe Colborne may expedite his return to junior, but I'd like to see him play nine NHL games interspersed with three or four more watching from the press box. Then return him to Ottawa for a month, then WJC camp, then a trade to a contending team in the OHL.

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You could end up spending a small fortune today because you are looking for ways to cheer yourself up. Feeling good about yourself has nothing to do with money and everything to do with attitude.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
With Venus, your ruling planet, moving through your opposite sign of Scorpio, you don't need to force things today. You only need power of persuasion — sweet words will get you everything you need.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There is no such thing as something for nothing and you will need to remind yourself of that several times today. Having said that, there are still a lot of generous souls out there.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
This is a fortunate time for you and you should milk it for all it is worth. Use your head today but listen to your heart as well. Get the balance right and you can do no wrong.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you need to make amends for something you did or said that you now regret, do it today. You don't have to make a big show of it but you do have to be sincere. Others will know if you don't mean it.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You can do no wrong and even your bitterest rivals want to see you do well. Can you believe that? You should, because it's true. Everything will go right for you today — enjoy it.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You are in a generous mood, which is nice. But it could also be dangerous if you give to those who don't really deserve it. Make sure your largesse goes to the right people.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
The decisions you make over the next 24 hours will cause ripples, small ones that then spread out and have consequences far and wide. Make it your aim to change your world, for the better.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Sudden events will force you to change direction maybe several times over the next few days. Being an adventurous Sag, you enjoy change so don't be fazed — be delighted!

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may not approve of what a friend is trying to do but it is not your business to tell them it isn't allowed. Everyone has freedom of choice and you must respect that.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Someone important is looking at you and and clearly like what they see. They will like it even more if you are modest and don't make a big noise about your success. How likely is that?

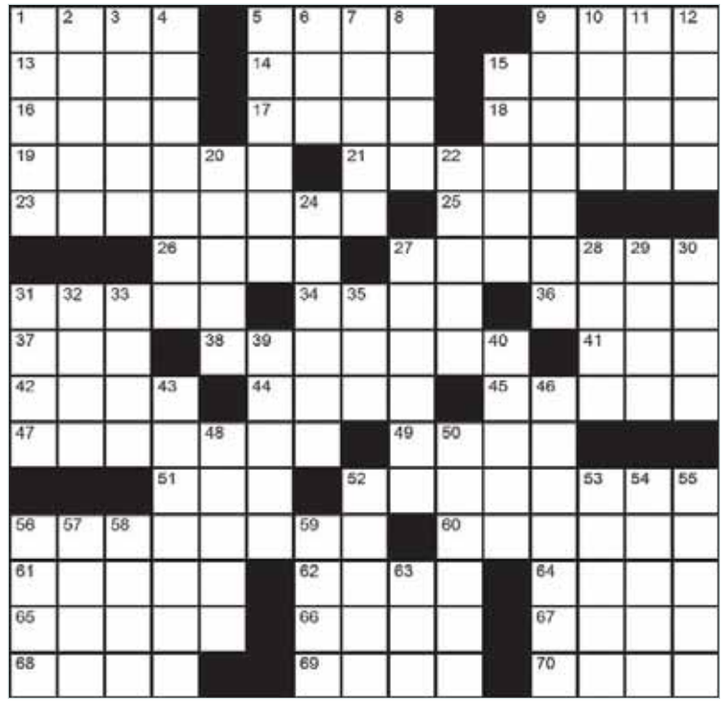
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Save your energy for the things that really matter. What are they? They are the things that give your life meaning. Success is important, of course, but don't neglect your "spiritual" side. Aim to be a better person.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



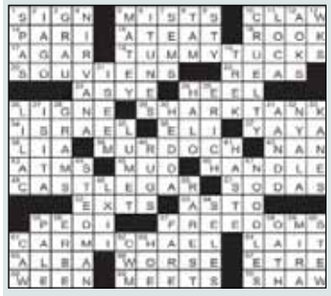
Across

1. Shortened sandwiches
5. Ticket tidbit
9. Thickening gum
13. Handled easily, as a ship
14. Hair hues, sometimes
15. Health: French
16. Nameless [abbr.]
17. Joke reaction
18. Gladiator's 2003
19. Edmonton-born hockey star Jarome
21. Reigning without losses
23. __ In Motion (BlackBerry, once)
25. Vodka, e.g.
26. Waiter's prop
27. Nigel of TV talent
31. The Divine Comedy writer
34. Actor, Scott __
36. Garner
37. 'Advert' suffix
38. Get supplies: 2 wds.
41. "The Hunt for __ October" (1990)
42. Saturate
44. "The '__ 'e knows above a bit, the bullock's but a fool..." - Rudyard Kipling
45. Chasm
47. Popular sport
49. Unaccompanied
51. UK record label
52. New Brunswick attraction, __ Rocks
56. Luxury 'house' of France
60. The Merchant of Venice character
61. __ acid
62. Dog, with Lhasa
64. Composer Mr. Berlin, et al.
65. Badger
66. Soaks flax
67. Night: French
68. Classic record label
69. Sister on "Charmed"
70. Mil. titles

Down

1. Way to travel: 2 wds.
2. Actress Jessica
3. Three: French
4. Mack __ (Canadian filmmaker known for his Keystone Kops movies)
5. Big desert
6. Travel screening gr.
7. "Yup."
8. "Touched __ Angel": 2 wds.
9. Central character in Louise Penny's Quebec-set mystery novels, Chief Inspector Armand __
10. Portion
11. End in __ (Draw): 2 wds.
12. Harness
15. Extract metal from ore
20. Guardians in ancient Rome
22. CCR's "Born on the __"
24. Robotically-enhanced Sci-Fi human
27. "It's done this way...": 2 wds.
28. Jackson 5 hometown in Indiana
29. Mining discoveries
30. Breaks off
31. 'D' of CD, variantly
32. Not worth _ __ (Without value)
33. Close
35. House-coolers in windows, briefly
39. Music chord type
40. Archaeology-style of prefix
43. Tissues brand
46. Canadian retailer, established in 1811 in Newfoundland
48. 1986 Tony-winning Best Play, __ Rappaport: 2 wds.
50. Fight
52. Overly active
53. "The _! __ Hollywood Story"
54. "__' on a Prayer" by Bon Jovi
55. Holds up
56. Schmoozes
57. "How _ __ Your Mother"
58. Traveller's documentation
59. Large instrument
63. Alphabetic trio

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

7			3		8			
1	8						3	4
	9			6		7		
	4		8	7				6
		7				2		
2				5	9		4	
		8		4			7	
6	5						9	3
			9		6			2

Yesterday's Sudoku

5	7	3	8	6	1	4	9	2
6	9	4	7	2	3	8	1	5
2	8	1	5	4	9	7	3	6
7	3	5	4	1	6	9	2	8
8	1	6	9	7	2	5	4	3
4	2	9	3	5	8	1	6	7
9	4	8	6	3	7	2	5	1
3	5	2	1	8	4	6	7	9
1	6	7	2	9	5	3	8	4

Weather

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
MAX: 10° MIN: 4°	MAX: 9° MIN: 2°	MAX: 12 MIN: 1°

BT BREAKFAST TELEVISION

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METEOROLOGIST
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